



## **\* Tips For \* Nursing Mothers**

### **Working and Breastfeeding**



Many mothers juggle being a mom and working outside the home. Women who return to work and continue to breastfeed their baby say it is “well worth the effort” and they would “do it again with the next baby”.

Mothers, babies, families and employers all benefit from breastfeeding.

Texas law gives a mother the right to breastfeed wherever she is allowed to be. It also encourages businesses to support a working mother to continue to breastfeed for as long as she wants.

#### **Tips before returning to work:**

- Choose a day care that supports breastfeeding moms.
- Get baby used to a bottle. Give the first bottle to baby between 2 to 6 weeks of age.
- Have another person feed your baby the bottles.
- Take as long of a maternity leave as you can. The early weeks are important for bonding with your baby and building your milk supply.
- Start storing expressed milk at least 2 weeks before going back to work. Store milk in small amounts, 2 to 4 ounces per bottle. Label bottles with date collected and baby's name.
- Take a day to practice and see what returning to work will be like.  
Example: Get baby and yourself ready

for the day, nurse, drop baby off at day care, go to work, pump during the day, pick baby up from day care, nurse, spend your evening as usual.

- If possible go back to work slowly-- part-time, 3/4 time and then gradually going to full-time.

#### **Tips when back on the job:**

- Make your first day back a Thursday. Working 2 days at first is easier than working an entire week.
- Nurse your baby before going to work.
- Pump or hand express your milk as often as you would nurse your baby during the day.
- Express milk before your breasts start to feel full.
- Nurse your baby when you return home, before bed, on weekends, and as often as you can whenever you are with your baby. Baby may want to nurse a lot in the evening-- it's normal.

#### **Concerned with a low milk supply?:**

- Nurse more often. Nursing your baby is the best way to help you make more milk.
- Pump more often at work.
- Double pump -- pump both breasts at the same time.
- Massage breasts, relax, think of your baby while expressing your milk.
- Reduce stress -- after work take a warm

bath, listen to soothing music, and be physically active.

- Make life simpler -- get help with chores at home and limit errands and extra responsibilities.
- Get more rest on weekends and during the night. Take baby to bed with you and nurse often.
- If trying to lose weight, lose no more than 1 pound a week.

### **Tips on handling human milk:**

- Wash hands before expressing milk.
- Collect milk in clean bottles or bags strong enough to hold milk.
- Store:
  - at work - in your own cooler with ice/cold packs or in company refrigerator
  - at home:
    - in refrigerator up to 5 days (temperature less than 40°F)
    - in freezer up to 3 months (temperature less than 32°F)
    - in deep freezer for 6 months or longer (temperature less than 0°F)
- If you think your breastmilk has spoiled, smell it. If it smells sour, throw it out.
- Store milk in the back of the refrigerator and freezer.
- Thaw milk by running warm water over the bottle or bag. NEVER boil or microwave it.
- Gently rotate bottle to mix milk before feeding it to your baby. Breastmilk will naturally separate into layers when stored.

The decision to continue breastfeeding while working is yours. Be patient, flexible, and proud of any and all your

efforts. Take one day at a time. And remember, any amount of breastmilk you give your baby is better than none. So do what you can, and you and your baby will be healthier.

Contact the Mother-Friendly Worksite Program at the Texas Department of Health if your employer needs information on how to support breastfeeding mothers in the work place. If you have further questions about managing work, school, and breastfeeding contact:

WIC Breastfeeding Counselor:

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La Leche League Leader:

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Lactation Consultant:

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Mother-Friendly Worksite Program:

Texas Department of Health,  
Breastfeeding Promotion Staff @ 512 -  
406 - 0744